## [With a Plate.]

A GREAT step has been taken towards a more satisfactory arrangement of Fungi by the discovery of the real structure of the fruit-bearing organs in Hymenomycetes. The species of the group Tremellini have not yet been sufficiently studied. and it is possible that fresh light may be thrown upon the Sclerotiacei, but, since the separation of Discomycetes, the other Fungi of the class agree admirably in structure. It is probable however that two groups of considerable importance, though not abounding in species, are still to be added to Hymenomycetes. The structure of Trichogastres and Phalloidei is confessedly very imperfectly understood. This has arisen partly from the extreme difficulty of ascertaining it with the older microscopes, but more especially from the plants having been seldom examined in a sufficiently early stage of growth. Till Klotzsch\* gave under the name of Hymenangium an analysis of Rhizopogon virens, which indeed is not arranged by Fries amongst the Trichogastres, nothing at all was known of the manner in which the reproductive organs are developed. The learned mycologist does not seem to have suspected its relation to the Trichogastres. He informs us that Dr. Walroth has found in Grunewald a genus allied to it, and that Gautiera of Vittadini belongs also to Hymenomycetes. Both are probably subterraneous Lycoperdons.

If a young plant of Lycoperdon cælatum or L. gemmatum be cut through and examined with a common pocket lens it will be found to consist of a fleshy mass perforated in every direction with minute elongated reticulato-anastomosing labyrinthiform cavities. The resemblance of these to the tubes of certain Boleti in an early stage of growth first led me to suspect that there must be some very close connexion between them. If a very thin slice now be taken, while the mass is yet firm, and before there is the slightest indication of a change of colour, the outer stratum of the walls of these cavities is found

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to consist of pellucid obtuse cells placed parallel to each other like the pile of velvet, exactly as in the young hymenium of an Agaric or *Boletus*, but without any trace of those processes which have been considered by some authors as male organs, Occasionally one or two filaments cross from one wall to the other, and once I have seen these anastomose. At a more advanced stage of growth four little spicules are developed at the tips of the sporophores, all of which, as far as I have been able to observe, are fertile and of equal height\*, and on each of these spicules a globose spore is seated. It is clear that we have here a structure identical with that of true *Hymenomycetes*, a circumstance which accords well with the fleshy habit and mode of growth.

There is some difficulty in ascertaining the exact structure of the species just noticed, as the fruit-bearing cells or sporophores are very small, and when the spicules are developed the substance becomes so flaccid that it is difficult to cut a proper slice even with the sharpest lancet. I have however satisfied myself as to the true structure by repeated observations. But should any difficulty arise in verifying it in the species in question, there will be none in doing so in Lycoperdon giganteum, Batsch, which more properly belongs to the genus Bovista.

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meter those on which they are seated. When arrived at their full growth they are somewhat obovate and produce four spicules which at length are surmounted each with a globose spore. When the spores are fully developed the sporophores wither, and if a solution of iodine be applied, which changes the spores to a rich brown, they will be seen still adhering by their spicules to the faded sporophores. The spores soon become free, but the spicule often still adheres to them as figured by Dr. Greville, 'Sc. Crypt. Fl.' t. 336, but they are not attached to the intermingled filaments. In Bovista plumbea the spores have very long peduncles. I regret that I have not been able to meet with a specimen in a fit stage of growth to show them adhering to their sporophores. Up to the time when the sporophores have nearly arrived at their full growth, the structure is essentially the same as in Lyc. giganteum, as will be seen from the subjoined figures.

Young specimens of *Geastrum* show the same anastomosing cavities as *Lycoperdon* and *Bovista*; I have not however at present been able to meet with a specimen sufficiently young to show the development of the spores. The only species which occurs abundantly in this neighbourhood is *G. Bryantii*, and in this species the fruit-bearing cells are already withered in extremely small specimens long before the volva is ruptured.

I regret not to have had an opportunity of examining Scleroderma and Elaphomyces in a sufficiently early stage of growth, but as M. Klotzsch has demonstrated the existence of true subterranean Hymenomycetes it is probable that they will be found to agree in structure. With respect to Batarrea Tulostoma, Cauloglossum and Podaxon, they are so evidently allied to Lycoperdon that there can be no doubt that they also are Hymenomycetes. Polysaccum according to Corda has spores furnished with an hilum, and seated upon short distinct cells springing from the flocci. It is probably therefore an ally of Lycoperdon. This however, and the genera not named above, referred to Trichogastres, require due examination.

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As in Lycoperdon, the fructifying mass consists of a highly sinuated hymenium. The walls are composed of elongated somewhat spathulate cells surmounted with from four to six spicules, each of which bears an oblong spore. The sporophores here again appear to be all fertile and of nearly the same height, but I cannot speak so positively on this point from the extreme difficulty of cutting a clean slice from a mass which at all times is very flaccid. It will be observed that when the number exceeds four the additional spicule is seated between two, which form one side of a square  $(\cdot \cdot \cdot)$  and that if a sixth is present it is placed opposite to the fifth  $(\cdot \cdot \cdot)$ .

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